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ABSTRACT

The personal frustrations and difficulties of an American political science professor who spent a year as a Fulbright lecturer at the Middle East Technical University (METU) in Ankara are described. Keeping busy helped. He spent much time merely surviving; for example, shopping for enough food became a daily affair because of the lack of supermarkets. Language was another problem. The official language of instruction at METU was English. However, most of the students didn't speak English, and he didn't speak much Turkish. Another frustration was the politicization of the students. The student organizations (METU was a leftist bastion) were very powerful. Students often boycotted exams or disrupted classes. Personal observations are also made concerning: the difficulty for Turkish faculty to be promoted (they had to take exams and write another dissertation); business practices (the Turks lacked good business sense); television (those who had it watched it all the time); and smog (the burning of low-grade coal caused terrific pollution). (RM)

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TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE IN A TURKISH UNIVERSITY: THE EXPERIENCE OF A FULBRIGHT LECTURER

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TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE IN A TURKISH UNIVERSITY:
THE EXPERIENCE OF A FULBRIGHT LECTURER

Introduction

In early September 1978, I arrived in Ankara, Turkey with my wife and two children to take up my position as a Senior Fulbright Lecturer in International Relations at the Middle East Technical University (METU). Already dazed by our long air journey from the United States, we fortunately were met at the airport by the Executive Director of the Fulbright Commission in Turkey. He quickly cleared us through the hassle of customs and whisked us off to our prearranged, furnished apartment.

As soon as this well-meaning Turkish gentleman left, however, we were plunged into the gloom of deep cultural shock. Everything seemed so different and strange. We could not read the signs; nobody seemed to speak English; we had no friends; and the food made us ill - - never "sick" for this proved to be an extremely vulgar Turkish term. As a result, I may never again be able to use this common English word without a certain amount of hesitancy.

In time I gradually overcame my depression, although my wife never did. (Due also to the endemic and proliferating political and sectarian violence, she and our two children returned to the United States shortly before Christmas.) As I look back upon my partially successful socialization into this foreign culture, I believe two things helped me in particular: (1) learning some of the rudiments of the Turkish language, and (2) keeping busy.

I studied Turkish along with a few other foreigners (a Swede, Dane,

Swiss, Egyptian, Libyan, and Japanese) at a place called the Turkish-American Association. This proved to be an organization financed by the International Communications Agency, an affiliate of the U.S. State Department. The TAA, as I referred to it, possessed a small, but very useful scholarly library, and also served as the host for a number of cultural programs such as movies, plays, lectures, and art exhibits. Its main role, however, seemed to be that of a school where hundreds of Turks could struggle to learn a little English. Some did, but most, like I, fell victim to the fact that Turkish is essentially spoken backwards compared to English. As an aglutinated language, ideas are formed by taking a root word and then adding suffixes to it. Furthermore, since Turkish is not an Indo-European language, the student finds that he cannot even recognize any cognates. Still, I learned enough to read some signs, find my way, and mouth the social expressions for "please," "thank you," "excuse me," etc. In addition, my Swedish classmate eventually became a close friend.

On account of the continuing violence and generally unsettled conditions prevalent in Turkey at that time - - a situation due largely to the economic malaise increasingly gripping the country - - my university did not open until the middle of October. It proved easy to keep busy, however, because there was so much that had to be done just to survive. I quickly learned firsthand what the textbooks meant when they stated that a hallmark of a developing country is the need to spend many hours a day accomplishing the little necessities of life which in a more developed society can be done so much quicker.

There were, for example, names over the entrances notwithstanding, no supermarkets in Ankara. One bought meat at a butcher shop, vegetables

from a green shop or the omnipresent hawkers who constantly seemed to fill the air with calls advertising their wares, daily bread from a small bakkal or neighborhood store, drinking water from the water man, and so on. Since preservatives were not used, canned foods infrequently found and not very appetizing when, and frozen foods non-existent, shopping for enough food became a daily affair.

Due to the fuel shortage caused by the deteriorating economic situation, hot water and heat in the winter were available only on a haphazard basis. During the week from 9-11 A.M., moreover, the electricity simply went "yok," an ubiquitous Turkish word used for all kinds of situations to mean "no," "there is (are) none," "get out," "it does not work," etc. By the end of my stay in Turkey, I had seen so many things go yok, that the word itself almost became a joke.

Shortly after I arrived, for example, the world famous Turkish coffee suddenly disappeared from the local economy because it was one of the few commodities Turkey could export to obtain badly needed hard foreign currency. Inveterate coffee drinkers, Turks were forced to turn to what was for them a tasteless instant brand obtained illegally, but easily, from Cyprus. In a fascinating example of cornering the market, "Nescafe" soon became the Turkish word for instant coffee. During a trip to Egypt in the Spring, I can recall ironically searching the bazaars of Cairo with a Turk for Turkish coffee to take back to Turkey.

The imperial power in the Arab world into the twentieth century, Turkey now seemed to be slipping behind her erstwhile dependents. Indeed, I was astonished at how many more consumer items were available in war-torn Beirut and even desperately poor Cairo compared to Turkey. All the more, when I travelled to "dirty little Greece, why would you want to go there?" as Turkish friends put it, I was absolutely stunned at the dif-

ference. No wonder Greece has since become a full-fledged member of the European Economic Community, while Turkey's admission even in the twenty-first century seems optimistic!

This economic morass was something new, however. For several decades previously, modern and secular Turkey, built from the ashes of the ruined Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I, had seemed to be one of the few third-world states genuinely taking off economically. Turkey's progress before the oil crisis began in the early 1970s was founded largely on the accomplishments of one of the truly heroic figures in history, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. Alone among Turkish leaders in World War I, this man was not tainted by military defeat, having repulsed the Allies at Gallipoli in 1915. Then when the Allies sought to dismember Turkey completely at the end of the War, Ataturk refused to submit. Eventually, he drove the invading Greeks back into the sea, thus winning what is now called "Turkey's War of Independence."

Determined to bring the backward Turks into the Western world, Ataturk next proceeded to abolish both the Sultanate and Caliphate, and established a secular republic based on Western legal concepts. He also launched a host of reforms such as introducing the Latin alphabet (with the result that Turks today cannot read their pre-1928 literature written in Arabic script), abolishing the fez and introducing the hat (an act, symbolizing the ascendancy of modern, secular values over reactionary, theocratic ones), decreeing equal rights for women, and ordering a people who before had carried only first names, now also to assume surnames in the Western fashion. Today, more than forty years after his death, this great man is still honored throughout Turkey, his omnipresent portrait or bust greeting one in every city, town, hamlet, or even building entered.

The transitory fame of most of the other twentieth century leaders around the world stands in stark contrast.

Yet despite Ataturk's accomplishments, Turkey has become no more than a halfway house between the old and the new. Modernization has proved to be an infinitely more difficult and gradual process than originally envisaged. Throughout my stay there, for example, Turks told me they were Westernized. But to me, at least, it seemed that beneath their thin veneer of modernity, there lay still vibrant the essence of Turkey's ancient culture. Ataturk had told the Turks to assume surnames - - and they had. Fifty years later, however, they still do not have the idea as we in the West do. I cannot count the many times I was introduced, even at my university, as "Mr." or "Professor Michael." Turks may now formally have surnames, but they know each other by their first names much more so than we in the West do. The old ways remain strong.

In addition, even at the risk of appearing off color, I must mention the toilets. Here is one of the first cultural shocks the Westerner receives. A Turkish or Eastern toilet is simply a hole in the floor nearby to which runs a trickle of water. Toilet paper is seldom to be had. Only in a small minority of Westernized establishments will the visitor find a functional commode as he or she knows this convenience.

The University

My university itself proved to be an excellent example of this ambivalence between the old and the new. Unique in Turkey, METU was specifically modelled after the American university. This meant it lacked the rigid formality of the European institutions, and sought to cultivate the more relaxed atmosphere we take for granted in the

United States. Young Ph.D.s, who had just joined the faculty, were allowed to teach their own courses and partake in departmental and university-wide decision making, just as much as their more senior colleagues. Class sizes were smaller and student-instructor relationships less formal. Unlike the other Turkish universities, most instructors at METU did not even wear ties. For a country that often seemed too stiff on protocol, this lack of formal attire proved pleasing indeed.

The similarities with its American counterpart went further. Since METU was established in 1956 to provide higher education to students throughout the Middle East, as its name implied, English was the official language of instruction. The university's catalog was in English and even the class roster sheets upon which I entered my final grades looked practically like carbon copies of their opposite number in the States. Indeed, METU used a grading system based on the same four-point scale of A, B, C, D, or F I was familiar with in America. Books, of course, were supposed to be in English, and the names of the courses in the Department of Political Science were in many cases identical to what was available in the typical American university. The superficial visitor might hardly know he was in Anatolia!

Beneath the surface, however, lay a very different substance. For example, although in theory the official language, English had not really been mastered by many of the students. Indeed, a sizeable minority of even my students spoke virtually no English at all, while only occasionally did I meet a student whom I could honestly describe as fluent in the language. The result was as might be expected: In reality, most of the Turkish professors conducted their courses in Turkish and also employed textbooks in that language. This, of course, caused difficulties for the approximately ten per cent of the students who were not Turkish.

Throughout my stay, I struggled to find the vocabulary that was simple enough to be understood in my lectures, but still sophisticated enough so that I might be able to say something meaningful. Repetition of phrases and the ability to speak slowly and distinctly also proved valuable assets. Through conscious effort, I probably reached more students that I otherwise would have.

Illustrative of the language problem was my Chairman's proposal that I give one of my final examinations in Turkish to those who preferred this option. Interestingly enough, I was told that some of my students who could not use spoken English very well, nevertheless, preferred to write their examinations in that language because it was in English that they had learned to perform academically. Despite these instances of linguistic schizophrenia, I declined the offer on the grounds that to give the examination in a language I could not even read, write, or speak would cause me to lose control of the class. Certainly, I added, the students knew when they signed up for my class, what the medium of instruction would be. Probably, I also felt, those who would fail my class would be able to make it up later in Turkish anyway.

The politicization of the students and associated violence represented another marked contrast to contemporary America. Indeed, because of the violence, METU had been closed almost as much as it had been opened in recent years. Seldom did a week go by without a new rumor of another impending closing sweeping the campus. Classes were often cancelled at the last moment to protest this or that, and I received the distinct impression that at my largely Marxist university (METU was notorious throughout Turkey as a leftist or Marxist bastion both for students and faculty) the student leaders and their organization were as powerful

as the University's administration.

Above both, however, stood the gendarmerie (a national police force in regular army-type uniforms) who literally occupied the campus, searching all who entered and often even left. This could prove time consuming since the campus was located outside Ankara and thus had to be reached by free, but very crowded buses which ran approximately on the half hour from a few central points within the city. When the bus reached the campus, its occupants invariably had to file out and be searched. The latter, however, occurred only for the males. Females were not frisked, leaving an obvious loophole for any would-be terrorist seeking to smuggle some weapon or other type of contraband onto the campus.

When I pointed this out and suggested that there should be female gendarmes to search the women, my students had a good laugh. Despite Ataturk's attempt to westernize, women definitely had not achieved anything near to a level of equality with their male counterparts. This was a fact I saw evidenced again and again: in the all-male coffee houses, the way wives followed after their husbands instead of walking beside them, the sharp manner women had to talk to men in order not to seem to be inviting their attentions, etc. "Respect for the beard" is dying hard in Turkey.

Once my lecture was simply ended at midpoint by two student leaders who entered the classroom and began to harangue my class. Grasping the situation, I slipped silently out the door. My colleagues told me that this was the way it was, and that next time I should simply take up where I had left off without alluding to what had happened. Someone then bought me a cup of tea to soothe my ruffled feelings.

On the day the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty was signed in 1979, the U.S. Embassy sent a message advising me not to go to the campus that day. It was one of the few times I ever heard from any of the numerous, but largely aloof American officialdom in Ankara. After contacting one of my Turkish colleagues, I decided to ignore the American warning. I suffered nothing from my decision as it proved to be business (confusion?) as usual at METU.

Actually the confusion started the very first day I saw my university. The Fulbright Lectureship for which I had applied and been accepted specifically listed the four courses I was expected to teach: International Relations I, International Relations II, International Organization, and a graduate Seminar on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. It was for these subjects, therefore, that I specifically prepared myself. Now that I had arrived at METU, however, none was to be offered during the first semester. Instead, I was given my choice of such listings as Turkish Public Administration, Turkish local government, or the Economics of Developing Areas, none of which was I qualified to teach.

I had told myself to be ready for the unexpected, but this seemed to be even more than that. It struck at the very definition of what I thought I was in Turkey to do. Later, however, I learned that such course confusion was standard fare for Fulbrighters. My recommendation for future Lecturers is to contact the specific department they will be teaching in for details, rather than to go by the course listing given to them by the host country's well-meaning, but not always fully informed Fulbright Commission.

Luckily, my Turkish colleagues proved understanding and helpful. They created a new course - - which apparently they had been considering anyway - - comparing American, British, and Soviet governments. Since I had given courses

covering this very material back in the States, I knew I could handle the assignment. Unfortunately, however, my notes were stored on the other side of the world. Immediately, I sent out an S. O. S. message to my Chairman, and eventually they arrived intact. In the meantime, however, I painstakingly had to reconstruct from memory and some books I obtained from the TAA Library and my colleagues, the lectures I was to deliver.

Again my Turkish colleagues proved understanding. The normal faculty teaching load at METU was only two, three-hour courses which, incidentally, was exactly half my load in the United States! Given my preparation problem, however, I was assigned only this one course on Comparative Government. A teaching load of three hours per week was certainly not something one should or even could complain about!

The first time I met my thirty-four, fourth year (senior) students, I learned that now we would decide upon what times we would meet, the previously published schedule of classes notwithstanding. The student leaders had their ideas about this, and since I was not exactly over burdened with specific time demands, I was amenable. We settled on a two-hour session for Monday and a one-hour one for Tuesday.

Next came the problem of textbooks. Since my course had been planned so late in the day, I was told there would not be enough time to order any from abroad. Later I discovered that even if there had been such time, the books still would be yok because of the hard currency problems. In a nutshell, Turkey did not have the money to order foreign books. From the METU and TAA Libraries, as well as my colleagues, therefore, I proceeded to obtain a few dated texts on American, British, and Soviet government. These I put on reserve at the university's library, and my problem was solved.

Further legerdemain in this area was necessary during the second semester

when I taught two courses for which I specifically had come to Turkey: International Relations to seventy-two students (the normal maximum was forty, but to meet as many Turkish students as possible I threw open the gates) and seven graduate students in a Seminar on the the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes. The United Nations Information Center in Ankara proved useful for this latter course because it distributed for free, as part of its function, numerous pamphlets and booklets concerning the UN in general and peaceful settlement in particular. My graduate students were mostly members of the Turkish foreign ministry (although one was the French cultural attache) and thus spoke good English. For the most part they proved eager to investigate the holdings of the U. N. Center. Surprisingly, however, none of them appeared to be aware of its existence in their midst until I, a foreigner, had called it to their attention.

Although I presume the U. N. had attempted to publicize its Center's existence, the message has apparently not been received. Why, I cannot with any certitude say, but, at the risk of missing the mark grieviously, I might speculate about the enervating ennui permeating third-world countries locked into an increasingly degenerating, violence spawning, economic malaise that discourages all but the most basic type of daily survival activities. When the temperature in one's apartment drops below freezing day after day, there is no warm water with which to bathe or shave, the electricity goes off regularly and irregularly too, and classes are constantly cancelled or interrupted to protest the country's situation - - all but the most intrepid scholar would be discouraged. Normal academic activity would seem to be a luxury in which only the relatively rich and well-off can indulge regularly.

Indeed, even when the physical conditions were tolerable the slothful

habits engendered by the unsettled conditions still seemed to operate. A personal experience will illustrate the point. At the start of the second semester, I had announced both orally and on my written syllabus the date of the midterm examination in the International Relations course I was giving. It was here incidentally I learned that the currency problems prevented the importation of foreign textbooks. After trying various expedients, I finally decided to go via the lecture route only because there was no way seventy-two students could all share one text on reserve in the library.

Everything then seemed to move along smoothly. Thirty-two students beyond the cutoff point of forty had signed up to hear what the "Imperialist," as I was half affectionately, half critically referred to by my mostly Marxist students, had to say about world politics. Although at times their Marxism prevented them from fully trusting or accepting my remarks, by the time of the midterm examination I seemingly had hit my optimum stride and appeared to be communicating to many and even fascinating some. Their demeanor while listening to me lecture, and the questions and comments they came up with both in and after class all indicated this. These were my halycon days at MEIU, so I was pleased with myself and even becoming somewhat cocky.

Oh, how I was shot down! Less than one-half hour before the midterm examination, a delegation of maybe ten students suddenly entered my office to announce that due to the arrest of some other students by the gendarmes the previous day, my class was not prepared "psychologically" to take the examination. Several then elaborated upon their reluctance. One told me there was a cross country race that day they wished to attend. In addition, added another, they only had received my notes the previous day. (The stu-

dents who understood English best had drawn up and distributed mimeographed copies of my notes.)

I thought I smelled a rat. These students were just goldbricking. The long, unsettled and irregular academic conditions had sapped them of their sense of academic duty and schedule. They simply had been too lazy to prepare for the examination and now were grasping at anything for an excuse. On the other hand, I thought to myself, this was their culture, not mine. Maybe "when in Rome I should do as the Romans do." Accordingly, I told the student delegation I would confer with my colleagues. I spoke with four of them, including the Chairman and his Assistant. They all advised me to give the examination even pointing out that two other professors in the department already had done so that very day. Resolved, I then returned to the student delegation and communicated my decision to proceed as originally scheduled.

Then began the examination to which nobody would come. Alone I sat in a large lecture hall, while outside, the student leaders haggled with two or three Turkish professors who had been sent to help me as proctors. Periodically, I was appraised of the state of the negotiations. Finally, after almost an hour of this, all seventy-two students quietly and politely entered the room and quickly took their seats. My colleagues told me to make no comments concerning what had just occurred, but simply proceed with the administering of the examination. As soon as the materials had been passed out and explained, however, twenty-six students arose and handed in blank test booklets as they left. The remaining forty-six took the examination. Later I was told this showed only a minority had opposed taking it. These "radicals," however, were able to disrupt the schedule without any effective sanctions.

My previously announced policy had been to give an automatic "F" to anyone who missed the examination without a legitimate excuse. The department ostensibly backed me on this issue, but privately advised me to relent. Given the general unsettledness then prevalent in my university, I was prone to accept their advice, and so, after mulling the matter over for a few days to, among other things, make my delinquent students ponder their future and not be appeased immediately, as I believe they thought they would, I finally announced I would give a make-up examination to the twenty-six, but lower their grade on it one-half a letter. Under the circumstances, I think I handled myself with reasonable principle, yet manifested empathy and compassion too. Nobody missed the make-up, although one month after I returned to the United States, I received via air mail a half dozen or so make-up examinations to grade from students who had been in the martial law prisons for various offenses and thus had missed my final.

Faculty promotion. - - Another definite difference I observed between Turkish and American universities was the procedure for promotion of faculty: It was exceedingly more difficult than in the United States.

There were twenty faculty members in my department and practically all of them had doctorates, mostly from prestigious American universities. Yet in the entire department there was only one person whose rank was higher than that of an Assistant Professor. This was because one had to write another dissertation, as well as pass a series of comprehensive examinations comparable to the American Ph.D. "prelims," before winning a promotion to the Associate or, as it was termed in Turkey," Docent" level. Full Professor required the same rigorous procedure once again. No wonder those few entitled to it, insisted on being referred to as "Professor Dr."

or "Docent Dr."

Other Observations

Business practices. - - During Ottoman times, the Turks looked down upon business activities as being rather undignified, largely relegating their pursuit to the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. When these minorities basically were eliminated during and after World War I, therefore, the Turks suddenly had to plunge into the void thus created. Sixty years later this traditional gap in their culture still has not been adequately bridged. Here then proved another striking contrast to America.

To me at least, Turks seemed to lack good business sense. True, they worked much longer hours than Americans, but often they did not appear to accomplish much. In any business establishment one entered, it invariably seemed that numerous employees simply sat or stood around doing little or nothing. In addition, what was being done frequently seemed so inefficient.

A simple cashing of a pay check at one of the ever so numerous banks involved five to ten clerks and could often take ten to twenty minutes from start to finish. In the United States, the same act could be accomplished by one person in less than thirty seconds. It seemed obvious to me that there was a need to delegate more authority, but apparently the Turks felt their procedure was necessary to prevent mistakes or possible embezzlement. Furthermore, I was informed, it also helped to alleviate the rate of unemployment which hovered around the forty per cent level. Unfortunately, it did nothing to lower the runaway, triple digit inflation that was sapping the Turkish morale and helping to fuel the violence.

The ritual followed when one sought to purchase a reasonably expensive

item, however, was particularly charming. Bargaining was still a must; anyone who paid the first price quoted for something, such as the exquisitely woven Turkish rugs, was simply a fool. While the polite haggling proceeded, the merchant sent for refreshments - - tea, a soft drink, or possibly a more exotic brew such as ayran, a tangy beverage made from yogurt.

If the prospective customer preferred, he likely would be permitted to take the item home on a trial basis. Trust, so lacking in such matters in the **West,** seemed implicit here. I can recall "borrowing" at least two relatively valuable items in this manner: a hand-woven rug and a Hellenistic coin of pure silver.

Television. - - Television was just making its initial inroads while I was in Turkey. Every evening for some five hours, those who had one, eagerly watched the single channel making its limited broadcast. (Sunday was special; programming was available during the afternoon too.) Many productions were American reruns ("Love Boat" was especially popular) but since they were all dubbed in Turkish, I did not watch them. Instead, I often listened to short-wave radio broadcasts of BBC.

I was told that Turkish lifestyles were being dramatically altered as a result of this new national pastime. Hours formally employed for visiting relatives and friends, no longer were available. Turkish conceptions of proper behavior and attire were also being altered due to the new models presented by the Western programming. One can only speculate what the ultimate result of all this will be.

Smog. - - During the winter months, Ankara was engulfed by a horrible smog caused largely by the burning of low-grade coal and the fact that the city was situated in a hollow which did not permit much air circulation. I never

had witnessed anything like it: At times it was not possible to see to the next block!

The first time the smog descended, I became ill with flu-like symptoms of weakness. My sudden "illness" was particularly upsetting since that weekend I was booked to take a four-day trip to ancient Hierapolis, Ephesus, and Aphrodiasias. (Turkey is a veritable archeological warehouse, storing the remnants of Hittite, Trojan, Phrygian, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, and Turkish civilizations. Indeed, METU claimed to be the only university in the world housing a museum containing ancient artifacts excavated from the campus itself! And a truly impressive museum it was.)

Knowing I would regret it, I, nevertheless, determined to proceed with my trip since it was an opportunity I might never again have. To my astonishment, however, the "flu" symptoms, far from being aggravated, disappeared as the long bus journey to the ruins proceeded. By the time I reached Hierapolis (modern Pamukkale, or literally "cotton fortress" for the unique, white stalactites formed by the mineral-rich, hot water cascading down the mountain side) I had recovered enough to plunge into the warm water pools and enjoy a swim among the Greek and Roman ruins. It only then dawned upon me that my "flu" symptoms probably were the result of breathing the smog. The permanent harm such inhalation can do over a period of years can only be left to conjecture. Such speculation need not be entirely academic, however, given the winter haze from wood and coal burning beginning to settle over some American neighborhoods now as we begin to struggle with our own energy crisis.

Boredom. - - Although Turks were among the friendliest people I ever have met (once a total stranger in Istanbul walked with me some three blocks to the proper bus stop and then proceeded to pay my fare!) my work and the

things I needed to do to survive time consuming, and the vestiges of the numerous ancient civilizations so available for inspection - - I often felt lonely and bored. Compared to a developed, western country, there was precious little left to do once the daily routines had been mastered or at least appeased.

Despite a few noteworthy exceptions, the cultural and linguistic barriers barred spontaneous, informal socializing with the Turks. Although I whiled away the hours by writing numerous letters at first, in time I began to lose the desire to do even this, putting it off with one excuse or another. The United States seemed so far away not only in distance, but also in reality, that even close relationships back there seemed to lose their meaning and importance. It was a strange feeling, but one which others too told me they have experienced. It was as if my former life no longer mattered or had become simply unimportant. The only thing that counted was the now and that was in Turkey.

In such circumstances, I developed a strong sense of camaraderie with a few other Westerners I met in Ankara. I became particularly close to the Swede I previously mentioned and an English couple I had met quite by chance at the airport in Ankara. Together we spent long hours (sometimes almost to dawn) talking, eating, and enjoying each other's company. Here we could converse freely without fear of offending some unknown cultural values or feelings. The hardships and problems of the day became the butt of our jokes and at times almost cynical laughter in the evening. This then was my retreat in Turkey to the other, former world I had krown in the West. Without such a refuge, life would have been exceedingly more difficult. With it, however, I seemed to be able to face anything that happened, even benefiting from it if not always enjoying it.

Conclusions

At times life as a Fulbright in Turkey proved so difficult and frustrating that I only half jokingly referred to myself as a "Halfbrighter" for having come in the first place. Certainly, most of my American colleagues doubted the wisdom of my decision. Almost invariably the initial thing they had asked me when they first heard of my Fulbright was "how much would it pay?" That it entailed a sizeable salary cut for that year was enough to suggest to most of them that I was making a mistake. When they heard reports of my various other problems they became convinced.

I too am persuaded, but of a totally different conclusion because mere material rewards and comforts are not the only important values in life. My final week at METU, for example, was particularly moving. One evening my colleagues gave a banquet for me at the Faculty Association, which was a sort of faculty club on the campus. The food was decent, the drinks plenty, and the conversation amazingly easy and frank. After formal speeches of gratitude as well as gifts had been exchanged, I repaired with some of my more earthly associates to "Ankara by night." Although a Turkish nightclub tends to be so dense with smoke from the omnipresent cigarette virtually every Turk learns to use by the age of twelve, I knew then that these Turkish professors had valued my year in their midst as much as I did.

The final farewells to my classes were maybe even more touching. A reception was held for me by the student organization, and several individuals presented me with little gifts and letters of thanks. Afterwards I sneaked off with a few special student friends to a pleasant <u>cay</u> or tea garden somewhere outside of Ankara. In my graduate seminar, the lone female student bestowed a bouquet of flowers upon me as the others stood by beaming. And finally, in my sometime dilinquent International Relations class, I almost

came to tears myself, as several of the girls did, when I spoke spontaneously to them during our final meeting about peace and their role in achieving it as the leaders of the future generation.

Returning to America, moreover, did not sever completely my relationship to Turkey. Largely through my efforts, one of my former undergraduates, who otherwise never would have left her country, received a graduate assistantship to pursue her studies in international relations at an American university. To a lesser extent, I also managed to help several others come to the United States to pursue their careers.

Finally, I might mention how my year at METU enabled me to discover and thus help alleviate one particular academic difficulty my Turkish colleagues regularly encountered. Since returning to America, I have sent several timely monographs and current texts to Turkey where, given the economic problems, such materials would have been virtually impossible to obtain. Occasional letters both from colleagues and students continue to keep me abreast of events in what was my home for one academic year.

Obviously, my Fulbright in Turkey was well spent. I probably learned more about real international relations there than an army of armchair scholars could in a lifetime. Maybe even of greater importance, however, living, learning, and surviving in another culture, gave me a confidence and strength of purpose that will serve me well for the rest of my life. Possibly, I was more fortunate than I deserved, and certainly the fine people (both Turkish and Western) I mostly dealt with helped me in so many ways. Now that I have returned to my American University, I can look back upon my experience in Turkey as one of the great adventures in my life. I certainly do not regret I did it, and most assuredly would not trade it for a normal year in America.